

Message Text

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ORIGIN AGRE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-09 ISO-00 IO-13 SIG-02 AID-05
EB-07 USIA-15 COME-00 TRSE-00 EPG-02 OIC-02 OES-07
L-03 STR-04 /082 R

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R 252305Z MAY 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY LONDON
INFO USMISSION OECD PARIS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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ROME FOR FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: FAO, OCON

SUBJECT: FAO COUNCIL, 71ST SESSION - CODEX ALIMENTARIUS
ISSUE

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1. AMONG THE MATTERS FOR DECISION AT THE FORTHCOMING
JUNE 6-17 SESSION OF THE FAO COUNCIL IS A PROPOSAL THAT ITS
SUBORDINATE BODY, THE COMMITTEE ON COMMODITY PROBLEMS (CCP)
SHOULD REGULARLY PARTICIPATE IN THE DECISIONS OF THE
FAO/WHO CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION WHICH IS A TECHNICAL
BODY WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO DEVELOP INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS
FOR FOOD COMMODITIES. IN OUR VIEW,

THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL SHOULD NEITHER APPROVE THE PROPOSAL NOR REFER IT TO THE CONFERENCE FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION. THE COUNCIL SHOULD MERELY TAKE NOTE OF THE MATTER, LEAVING ANY FURTHER DISCUSSIONS TO THE CCP.

2. THE PROPOSAL WAS PUT FORWARD AT THE MAY MEETING OF THE CCP BY THE LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, ORGANIZED AS THE GROUP OF 77. WITHIN THE G-77, IT ORIGINATED WITH SOME AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHO ARE DISSATISFIED WITH A PROPOSED CODEX STANDARD FOR COCOA NOW IN AN ADVANCED STAGE OF THE ADOPTION PROCEDURE. THE G-77 PROPOSAL IS THAT "THE COMMITTEE SHOULD BE ASSOCIATED, IN PARTICULAR, WITH THE TASK OF MONITORING THE IMPACT OF FOOD STANDARDS ON THE

EXPORT INTERESTS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. WE RECOMMEND THAT THE COMMITTEE SHOULD BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL ITS WILLINGNESS TO PERFORM SUCH A TASK."

REPORTEDLY, THERE IS DISAGREEMENT WITHIN THE G-77 ON THE MERITS OF THE PROPOSAL; OUTWARDLY, THE USUAL MONOLITHIC SOLIDARITY IS EXHIBITED.

3. AT THE CCP THE PROPOSAL WAS WIDELY OPPOSED BY THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES, AND THE DEBATE ENDED IN DEADLOCK. THE REPORT OF THE SESSION STATES THAT "THE COMMITTEE WAS UNABLE TO REACH CONSENSUS ON THIS SUBJECT. IT AGREED THAT THIS SUBJECT AND ITS DELIBERATIONS ON IT SHOULD BE CALLED TO THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL."

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4. THE U.S. FEELS STRONGLY THAT INVOLVEMENT OF CODEX IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND ISSUES OF TRADE POLICY WOULD DESTROY ITS VALUE FOR INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL WORK, A LOSS THAT WOULD HURT LDCS AND DCS ALIKE. THE CODEX ENJOYS A HIGH REPUTATION, HAS PERFORMED VALUABLE WORK, AND HAS BEEN ALMOST ENTIRELY FREE OF POLITICS AND THE FAMILIAR NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES COMMONPLACE AT MEETINGS OF MANY BODIES IN THE UN SYSTEM.

5. THE CODEX TECHNICAL COMMITTEES ARE OPEN TO ALL MEMBER GOVERNMENTS OF BOTH FAO AND WHO AND IN OUR VIEW THOSE COUNTRIES INTERESTED IN A PARTICULAR COMMODITY SHOULD PARTICIPATE AND MAKE THEIR VIEWS KNOWN AS STANDARDS ARE BEING DEVELOPED. TOO, ALL COUNTRIES HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COMMISSION WHERE EACH STANDARD IS APPROVED.

6. ACTION ADDRESSEES SHOULD INSURE THAT HOST GOVERNMENT DELEGATES TO THE COUNCIL SESSION ARE AWARE OF THE ISSUE

AND, AS APPROPRIATE, EMPHASIZE U.S. CONCERN AND URGE FIRM
OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSAL. REACTION SHOULD BE REPORTED,
IF POSSIBLE BY JUNE 1. VANCE

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition History: n/a
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